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ABSTRACT

This bulletin (second in a series of three) provides current information and basic guidelines for the establishment or continuation of kindergarten programs. The bulletin discusses pre-6-year-old programs in their historical perspective and includes a section on the current status of research. The legal basis for kindergartens is also investigated. Terms such as early childhood education, nursery school, kindergarten, and primary school are legally defined. Five guidelines are given concerning mandatory kindergartens, length of school year, definition of school day, eligibility for kindergarten attendance, and control of communicable diseases. Another 10 guidelines govern operation of the program. These guidelines relate to community resources, pupils' self-concept, pupil-teacher ration, staff size, daily schedule, curriculum, and the first steps in establishment. Inter-relations, interaction, and involvement with teachers, auxiliary personnel, parents, administrators, and the State Department of Education are examined in the final bulletin section. (MH)

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THE KINDERGARTEN, A PLACE FOR LEARNING

Bulletin Two: Operational Guidelines for Administrators

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

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FOREWORD

This is the second of a series of three bulletins designed to assist superintendents, supervisors, principals and teachers in meeting the new law which mandates the establishment of kindergartens in the public schools of Rhode Island.

Bulletin Two: Operational Guidelines for Administrators offers basic guidelines for those who are responsible for the establishment or the continuance of programs especially designed for children under six.

The state Department of Education extends its sincere appreciation to Dr. Mary T. Thorp, Professor Emerita, Rhode Island College, for providing the department with her knowledge and experience in early childhood education in the preparation of this bulletin.

William P. Robinson, Jr.
COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

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I. HISTORICAL SETTING

National Trend

Nearly a century has passed since Susan Blow, at the direction of Superintendent William T. Harris of St. Louis, set up the first public kindergarten, the first pre-school to become a place of learning and an integral part of a public school system. Yet only recently has interest in the establishment of educational programs for all very young children swept the nation. To be sure private schools have for years enrolled a goodly number of five-year olds in kindergarten, and day care centers have offered services to three, four, and five-year olds. Some public school systems have voluntarily extended services to include kindergarten programs. Now in the mid-sixties, federally supported Headstart projects have enrolled thousands of underprivileged pre-schoolers; under Title I of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act both year-round and summer programs have been in operation; and currently Follow Through projects are being set up to insure continuity in school learning.

Across the country efforts are being intensified to provide more adequately for the education of all very young children. Legislation at the state level has demonstrated concern by adding to and expanding services, lowering the age range for school entrance, increasing the requirements for certification of teachers in nursery schools and kindergartens, and permitting the financing of these schools from the general school funds.

Practically every state has legislation authorizing some provision for pre-schoolers in the public school system. In some instances, the legislation may be merely permissive, giving the local school committee option to provide the service; in others it is mandatory, requiring the service be provided if and when parents make petition. In addition, some state departments of education are required by law to assume a leadership role in providing curriculum guides, defining standards of operation, and establishing teacher certification for these schools for the very young.

In 1966, the Educational Policies Commission,[1] in recommending the extension of school experience to children four years of age, cautioned this does not mean:

> "...a simple downward extension of, or preparation for, the programs now offered in most first grades. We envision a program uniquely adapted to children of ages four and five; the program for six year olds would be altered to take into account the earlier schooling of the children, rather than vice versa.
>
> "The program suitable for four and five year olds differs in basic ways from the traditional first grade, for it is not focused on reading, writing, and arithmetic, and it need not be an all-day program....The objectives of instruction in these years lie in four

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[1] Educational Policies Commission. Universal Opportunity for Early Childhood. Washington, D. C.: National Education Association. 1966, pp. 7-11.

major areas--intellectual, emotional, social, and physical....With universal early childhood education, almost every child would have a higher starting point in knowledge and developed ability. Almost every child would view the teacher and the school less as a source of answers than as a source of encouragement to exploration and self-realization."

Direction from Research

Through the years, especially in the present decade, research has emphasized the importance of the early years of life both in the unplanned, unstructured experiences in the home and in the somewhat planned and structured learning environment in the school. Bloom[1] suggests that 50 per cent of intellectual capacity develops before the child's fourth birthday. From the data it would appear age four is not too soon for some type of planned program. Indeed the so-called "peak learning years" have been marked from age 4 to age 8. The principal factors identified as instrumental in developing intelligence include:

(1) creating the desire to learn;
(2) wide opportunity for language experiences;
(3) extending the learning environment;
(4) opening the world of books and other information media;
(5) offering many opportunities for solving problems and making wise choices, as the child explores and experiments with materials and ideas;
(6) developing a satisfying self-image as he acts and interacts with people (family, peers, adults).

The accumulating data from the research clearly indicate that older elementary children who have had kindergarten experience make better social and emotional adjustments and have a wider base for establishing communication skills.

Rhode Island's Story

The oldest public kindergartens were organized in 1881 in Newport and in 1894 in Providence. Yet the movement to establish these classes for preschoolers was slow in developing; in the early forties, Rhode Island, like other states, welcomed federal funds which came through the Lanham Act to aid in the group care of young children. However, when funds were withdrawn in March, 1946, the state faced a real crisis. How could at least some portion of the program be salvaged? How could standards be maintained when federal supervision was no longer available?

The Commissioner of Education, alerted by parents, teachers and other concerned groups, appointed a state-wide committee to study the services in operation in the state. The committee used questionnaires and direct observation, involving in the survey all public and private and parochial schools having programs for children under six years of age. Centers operating as day-care centers as well as those offering only half-day educational programs were included in the study.

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[1] Benjamin S. Bloom. Stability and Change in Human Characteristics. New York. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 1964.

In 1949, this survey committee made its report and recommended among other items the establishment of a set of standards for evaluating all those educational services for pre-schoolers known to be in existence. Thus it was the Commissioner who named a three-member committee which he charged with the responsibility of defining standards, preparing an application form for approval, and describing procedures for approving an agency or school for pre-school children.

While this committee was still at work, the Rhode Island Association of School Superintendents in 1950 sought the help of the State Department of Education in making an extensive study of this whole issue of pre-schools including a wide gamut of related problems. A large number of professionals from several disciplines (health, education, welfare) and from public and private schools and agencies participated. These troublesome areas were examined: Admission Age to Kindergarten and Grade One; Child Growth in the Pre-School Years; Organization of the Primary School to include Kindergarten; Critical Review of Admission Practices; and Role and Function of Kindergarten and First Grade. The conclusions and recommendations from this cooperative effort were issued and distributed in mimeographed form in May, 1951. The Commissioner in the Foreword wrote of his gratitude to the Superintendents for taking the initiative in the study and urged local School Committees "to review local policies in the light of these findings."

The committee working on standards participated in the Superintendents' study and so broadened its scope of activity. In 1953 Standards for Approval were issued in mimeographed form for trial use by the Committee on Approval. The Committee visited every private school or agency which voluntarily applied for approval. The first printed manual appeared in 1954. Re-issued in 1960, this manual has been the basis for evaluating private pre-schools and from its use a list of approved schools has been maintained at the State Department through the years. Now, however, new legislation requires the licensing of private nursery schools and other programs of educational services to children between the ages of three and six years of age where such schools operate one or more sessions of less than four hours per session daily. Standards have been adopted by the State Department of Education, effective September 1, 1969, as the Rules and Regulations for Educational Programs for Very Young Children.

II. LEGAL BASIS FOR KINDERGARTENS

Prior to 1969

As was noted earlier legislation concerning pre-schools had been permissive rather than mandatory; that is, school systems were permitted to establish classes for children under six and were allowed to use local funds for their operation. Yet in the mid 1960's less than half of the systems provided kindergarten experience as an integral part of their program.

Then, too, although the State Board of Education had issued Standards of Approval for private pre-schools and the State Department of Education had been using these standards to evaluate them when so requested, the whole procedure was permissive rather than mandatory. Too few pre-schools were seeking approval. There was need for legislative action.

It began to be clearly indicated that the legislature should:

(1) mandate kindergartens so that all children in the state could benefit from early school experiences.

(2) provide the legal structure for the operation of private kindergartens and nursery schools.

Definition of Terms

Since terms are often used variously, certain basic educational terms which appear frequently in this discussion are herein defined:

(1) Early Childhood Education shall include nursery school, kindergarten, and grades 1-3.

(2) Nursery School is a school operated by an independent or a public agency which meets the needs of the child of three and four, giving opportunity for developmental experiences, child guidance, parent education, and family consultation service.

(3) Day Care Center - Day Nursery. Although not the specific concern of this bulletin the legal definition of day nursery made by Rhode Island law is herein quoted: Any person who receives for the purposes of nursing and care apart from their parents or guardian, at one time, three or more children not of common parentage under the age of 14 years, for a period or periods exceeding four but not exceeding twelve hours, irrespective of compensation or reward, shall be deemed to maintain a day nursery. No person shall maintain a day nursery without first obtaining a license to conduct such nursery from the State Department of Public Welfare as hereinafter provided. (Day Nursery Laws, General Laws of Rhode Island, 1956, Title 40, Chapter 15 - as amended by the General Laws of 1962, Chapter 104, Section 1 and hereafter.)

(4) Kindergarten is a school operated by an independent or a public agency which meets the needs of the child of four and five and which provides for him many rich experiences to encourage his growth and development.

(5) Primary School is a school operated by an independent or a public agency for the child of six through eight (grades 1 through 3), offering the usually accepted program for these classes.

(6) Eligibility for Attendance in kindergarten is defined by law (General Laws of Rhode Island, 1956, as amended).

16-2-27. Eligibility for attendance - Kindergarten - Every child who has attained or will have attained five years of age on or before December 31 of any school year shall be eligible to attend kindergarten during all the days that the kindergartens are in session during said school year. All municipal school systems in this state then having kindergartens must comply with this section by the opening of the school year in September of 1967, provided, however, that on and after the passage of this act any municipal school system which may institute a program of kindergarten shall be subject to the provisions of this section.

(An exceptionally handicapped child shall be eligible for special education upon the attainment of his third birthday.)

Legal Authority

The following guidelines are established persuant to the provisions of Section 2, Chapter 2 of Title 16 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, 1956 as Amended.

Mandatory Kindergartens

16-2-2. Town schools required - school year - location. - ...Beginning in September, 1969 such school facilities shall include a sufficient number of kindergartens; provided that such requirement for kindergartens may be waived until September, 1970 in the public interest by the Commissioner of Education as to any school system upon application of the School Committee having control of such system.

Guideline 1. Beginning with the opening of school in September, 1969 and thereafter, every school system in the state shall provide free public education to all children in kindergarten through grade twelve. The establishment of kindergarten is now mandatory.

Length of the School Year

16-2-2. Town schools required - school year - location. - Except as herein afterwise specifically provided, every town shall establish and maintain for at least one hundred eighty (180) days annually exclusive of holidays a sufficient number of schools in convenient places under the control and management of the school committee and under the supervision of the Board of Education.

Guideline 2. The length of the school year is set at a minimum of 180 days.

Definition of the School Day

State Board of Education's Regulation on the Definition of the School Day: "For the purposes of 16-2-2 and 3 of the General Laws of 1956, a 'day' or 'school day' is defined by the Board of Education to mean regular operation of all schools in the town for a period which in the case of elementary schools consists of not less than five hours of actual school work, excluding lunch and recess periods, and in the case of secondary schools of not less than 5 1/2 hours of actual school work, excluding lunch and recess periods. (In the case of kindergartens, however, the school day is defined to mean regular operation for not less than 2 1/2 hours.)* Regular operation of any school for less than the minimum hours specified above shall require the prior approval of the Commissioner of Education, who shall from time to time report to the State Board of Education on approvals granted."

*Amendment added on March 13, 1969

Guideline 3. The length of the school day for kindergarten classes has been defined as not less than 2 1/2 hours.

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Eligibility for Attendance in Kindergarten

16-2-27. Eligibility for attendance. - Every child who has attained or will have attained five years of age on or before December 31 of any school year shall be eligible to attend kindergarten during all the days that the kindergartens are in session during the said school year.

Guideline 4. All pupils who have attained the age set by law are eligible to attend kindergarten. However, the school committee has the authority to admit children at an earlier age.

Communicable Disease Control

Rules and Regulations of the State Director of Health and the State Commissioner of Education relating to School Health Services require immunization against certain communicable diseases for children entering school for the first time.

"Every person upon first entering any public or private school in this state as a pupil shall furnish to the administrative head of such school evidence that such person has been immunized against smallpox, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, and measles (or has had natural measles); or a certificate from a licensed physician stating that such person is not a fit subject for immunization for medical reasons; or a certificate signed by the parent or guardian stating that such immunizations are contrary to his beliefs.

Whenever possible, the evidence for completing the specified immunizations should be a certificate signed by a licensed physician. However, in the circumstances where the physician's records are lost or are not available or where the prospective pupil was immunized in a special public health clinic in which no permanent record of immunization was established, the signed statement of the prospective pupil's parent or guardian attesting to completion of the specified immunizations will suffice as evidence.

In the circumstance where the person cannot supply evidence for one or more of the required immunizations such person shall provide the administrative head of the school with evidence of having obtained the lacking immunization(s) within one year of the date of first entrance.

Guideline 5. The school administrator has the responsibility of following the above Regulation - Communicable Disease Control, concerning the immunization against smallpox, diphtheria, tetanus, polio and measles of pupils upon first entering school.

III. OPERATION OF THE PROGRAM

These guidelines relate to the administration and operation of kindergartens in Rhode Island. They should be used as a frame of reference for all public school systems in the state as well as those privately established and supported.

Purposes Served

According to the research the child of four and five is on the threshold of his "peak years for learning." This indicates that he should be offered the opportunity to learn in the school setting, with a program which permits freedom to explore and to experiment freely within a safe and somewhat planned framework. Here his experiences with things, people, and ideas should develop positive, healthy attitudes toward himself, his peers, and adults.

Guideline 6. The major purposes served by the daily activities of the school program for these young children include:

(1) promotion of physical and mental health with emphasis on strengthening motor coordination and inner emotional controls

(2) encouragement of self-acceptance, self-understanding, and self-worth

(3) development of language skill in listening and speaking as basis for communicating feelings and ideas

(4) initiating skill in self-expression through art, music, and body movement

(5) learning to observe, inquire, and investigate; to seek solutions and test answers; and so to acquire and to use knowledge

(6) development of social skills in the give and take of life with peers as well as adults, growing increasingly self-sufficient and responsible for personal behavior

(7) giving abundant opportunity for detecting physical and intellectual handicaps and for planning needed health and welfare services.

The Teacher and her Staff

The teacher should have both a broad liberal education and professional preparation as well; areas of study should include early childhood education, human growth and development with emphasis on the child's earliest years, nutrition, mental and physical health, parent education including family life; development of social and community relations; and supervised experience with young children, including observation, participation, and student teaching.

The staff, regularly employed personnel and volunteers, should be able and willing to work cooperatively with the teacher in meeting the needs not only of the child himself but also of those in his family setting. The staff should participate in an in-service program planned to improve the quality of the services offered to children.

The teacher should draw upon such professionals as physician, psychologist, nurse, social worker who know the needs of these children; and upon elementary school supervisors and consultants who can help in the articulation of the kindergarten program with that of the elementary school.

Guideline 7. The teacher shall have the proper certificate for her assignment as prescribed in the rules and regulations of the state Board of Education governing teacher certification. Credentials of auxiliary school personnel are determined by the employing agency. However, it is recommended that the employing agency follow the state Department of Education's guidelines which are included in the booklet, Auxiliary School Personnel: Their Employment and Utilization.

The Teacher and Community Resources

There are a variety of resources in most communities designed to cooperate with the teacher in her work. These include health and welfare services as well as cultural and spiritual agencies. Especially is it important that she know what is available and how to make use of it. That is, as the key adult in the child's school life, she should assume responsibility for involving other professionals and non-professionals in meeting the basic needs of individual children and their families, and then in integrating the total contribution of these several disciplines in the best interest of this child in this situation.

Guideline 8. The teacher should draw upon all the resources available to her in developing the school's program for the children.

The Pupil's Self-Concept

The child is a unique entity, a growing person who needs understanding and acceptance as he learns about his world and his place in it. At four, going on five, he is eager, curious, enthusiastic, imaginative, energetic. He seeks to learn a little about many things. He needs help in understanding himself, in expressing his feelings in acceptable ways, in sharing his thoughts and materials with his peers, and in interacting with his peers and other people. As he works and plays he should come to respect himself as a person able and willing to function independently and as an acceptable member of the groups in which he is a member.

Guideline 9. The educational opportunities offered through the school should encourage the child to develop a positive concept of self-worth, a self-acceptance on which to build as he grows self-autonomous and becomes self-directed.

Pupil-Teacher Ratio

It is common practice for a public school teacher of kindergarten to be assigned two classes, with a morning or an afternoon session for each group of children. This gives her the responsibility of forty to fifty different pupils in a single day. Therefore, to assume her total professional duties she should be given:

(1) a group small enough to insure the safety and health of each child

(2) facilities to provide maximum learning experience for each individual

(3) time to prepare for and hold conferences with parents on an individual as well as group basis

(4) clerical help with cumulative records

(5) time for cooperative planning with all those who are on her team: school nurse and physician, psychologist and principal, aide and assistant

Guideline 10. The accepted class size is between 20 and 25 children, with 20 more desirable than 25. It is recommended that the following pupil-teacher ratio be set:

age 4 years - 15 - 20 children with one teacher and one auxiliary

age 5 years - 20 - 25 children with one teacher and one auxiliary

Staff Size

The operation of a kindergarten program, with its many opportunities for free play and mobility, mandates the presence of sufficient staff to insure the safety and well being of the children. In addition to Guideline 10, this guideline is offered:

Guideline 11. The accepted staff size should guarantee that a capable adult is with the class at all times and a second adult is within hearing distance of the class.

Daily Schedule

Local circumstances set certain limits on the scheduling of time. However, the single session is most common. Usually the session is divided into three major segments: (1) The first offers opportunity for cooperative planning of all pupils with their teacher; the engagement in self-chosen tasks, with the privilege of going from one interest center to another, working as individuals or in small groups; and then re-assembling as a total group to evaluate what has been achieved and to re-set goals for the next period. (2) The second offers those essentials for healthy, personal and group living: toileting, resting, snack-time, rhythms, and physical experiences. (3) The third segment is a more structured period for group experiences, such as story telling; reading; developing facility with language; cognitive learnings: mathematics, science, social studies; and music, poetry, drama.

They move freely from individual to small group activities; from active to quiet experiences, from opportunities to converse freely to a time to listen attentively; from satisfaction in problem-solving to handling feelings of frustration when using novel materials; from joy in creative personal achievement to awe in the beauty of the contribution of a peer.

Guideline 12. The schedule of activities should promote and foster a quality of living and growing which satisfies the basic needs of the Fours and Fives; though somewhat structured it should permit flexibility to capture "the teaching moment" when it arises.

The Curriculum

The curriculum for the Fours and Fives offers educational experiences based on their physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs, and our knowledge of how they learn and how we should instruct. In planning, both structured and unstructured, the teacher keeps in focus day-by-day and long-range goals. She draws from all curriculum areas: literature, social studies, science, language arts, mathematics, health, music, art, and dramatics. Any one activity involves two or more of these areas, with a blending together of what is known and what is new, of what is science and what is health.

Emphasis in the kindergarten curriculum is on the establishment of attitudes and the learning of skills, and in addition the initial development of basic concepts. That is, the content of:

(1) Social Studies offers first-hand experiences in playing alone and with others, sharing, taking turns; observing, exploring, experimenting; gathering information by listening, discussing, participating; experiencing special holidays and field trips.

(2) Science gives many sensory experiences especially in the physical and biological world.

(3) Language Arts helps to translate ideas in the mind into words and to develop communication skill, especially the arts of listening and speaking and the use of art media to express thoughts.

(4) Mathematics gives experience with concepts relating to size, quantity, shape, time, weight, place, and the like.

(5) Health as a curriculum area provides opportunity to develop healthful attitudes, safety habits, motor coordination, physical skill, and some understanding of self and others.

(6) Music gives a way of expressing the inner self creatively through singing, listening, rhythmic responses, and musical instruments.

(7) Art challenges the expression of thoughts and feelings through manipulation of materials (paint, clay, paper, wood) and by the use of tools (brushes, crayons, hammers, saws) with emphasis on the process rather than the product.

Guideline 13. The curriculum for the Fours and Fives promotes physical, social, emotional and intellectual development and offers learning experiences through the whole gamut of content areas. It motivates the desire and readiness to read and to write. Yet it delays the teaching of reading per se until the individual child demonstrates he is physically and emotionally ready, which is usually as he approaches six years of age.

Facilities and Equipment

The Fours and Fives need physical surroundings and a psychological climate which promote healthy growth. They need space; 35 square feet per pupil in the classroom and twice the area for outdoor play. They need space that is not only safe and hygienic but also open, uncluttered and functional.

The equipment and materials should encourage exploration and experimentation, should invite inquiry and discovery, and should lead to creative expression and end in satisfying experiences.

Open spaces for block building, housekeeping, wheeled toys, and prone rest; open shelves for orderly storage; a library table with selected books at hand; a social living center to facilitate group sharing; and tables for academic learning and skill development; all are essential for these young children in their first year at school.

Guideline 14. The kindergarten classroom and playyard should invite, challenge, stimulate, and guide learning activities which are planned in accordance with the needs of these children in this situation.

Initial Steps in Establishment

The establishment of kindergartens has been mandated by law: kindergarten must now be made an integral part of every school system. The state Department of Education has already issued the first of three bulletins, Bulletin One: Materials and Equipment for the Fours and Fives, where suggestions are made to help administrators in setting up new kindergartens or in evaluating materials and equipment presently in use in existing kindergartens.

Guideline 15. The establishment of a state-wide public supported kindergarten program will guarantee to all children a fair and wholesome beginning only if a professionally prepared teacher develops with them in a healthy environment with appropriate materials and equipment and in a well-ordered school setting.

IV. INTER-RELATIONSHIPS, INTERACTION, INVOLVEMENT

When the kindergarten is a place for learning for the young, a number of adults plan and strive to make it so. This implies that inter-relationships have been established, interaction is not only permitted but invited, and personal involvement of all concerned is practically assured. This is a joint enterprise, where the teacher holds the key; yet she reaches out to use the know-how of many people, both professionals and non-professionals and she seeks the resources not only of the school of which the kindergarten is a part but also of the wider community in which the school is located. That is, the teacher as the team leader looks to other disciplines for guidance: principal and consultant, nurse and physician, social worker and case aide, psychologist and psychiatrist. Then, too, she turns to parents and members of the family as well as to others in the community who understand the needs of this child because of who he is, where he lives, and what he does. She turns first to one and then another as she endeavors to make the kindergarten a place where each and every one of her young charges can have a productive and happy round of daily activities.

As so many different people work together in this joint enterprise toward a common purpose, it becomes imperative that areas of responsibility be clearly defined and relationships be readily envisaged. It is necessary that each team member be aware of the goals which have been set, the philosophy underlying the overall program, and the what, when, and how of his contribution to the task. Although the team as a unit must develop its own frame of reference, its own specifics, it may be helpful to give here general role descriptions for several members of the team.

Role of the Teacher

The kindergarten teacher is a generalist who is directly and closely related to the pupils, the instructional program, and to her team members. For her role of leadership she needs empathy for and belief in people. She needs to know how to establish warm and friendly relationships so that communication channels are open between and among the children, their parents, and all others on the team. For her diversified role, the teacher needs:

Initiative to seek guidance and direction from team members so as to utilize the specific area of competence of each one.

Understanding of people and how they function so as to hurdle the barriers between the disciplines and to encourage respect for the contribution each makes to the work at hand.

Professional competency to take all we know about children and put it to work in her kindergarten, to utilize fully the competencies of all on her team, and to keep her supervisor and principal informed and concerned about her programs.

Leadership skills to conduct conferences, both structured and non-structured; to encourage the sharing of knowledge about children in general and these children in particular; and to determine through interaction and involvement how best to harmonize the suggestions which come from cross yet related disciplines.

Personal qualities of inquiry, ingenuity and creativity which lead not only to greater personal development but also to the establishment of smooth working relationships in the kindergarten with the children, in the school with other adults, in the home with parents and the extended family, in the community with other agencies, and perhaps even with an institution of higher learning which is seeking facilities for study and research.

Role of Auxiliary Personnel

It will be with auxiliary personnel that the teacher and the children work most closely. Since the concept is relatively new, the role should be clearly and concisely defined. She works directly under the supervision of the teacher who is the recognized, responsible agent. Her functions include:

(1) non-instructional duties such as preparing the classroom for the day; helping in the activity period; helping to supervise outdoor play; preparing materials, audio-visuals and others; checking and ordering supplies; helping to supervise toileting, rest, and snack time; setting up the classroom for the next day.

(2) re-enforcing learning experiences by listening to a child re-tell a story or poem; encouraging a pupil to continue a task; interesting a restless pupil or one who has been upset.

The teacher should relate herself to this new colleague, helping her to see her place in this school setting. She plans regularly with the auxiliary person, helps her to work with and for the children, interprets the school's philosophy and the kindergarten program, and encourages a free exchange of reaction to what is being done and why, what should be done instead of how. Then, too, she should help this adult to grow as a person, to improve her competence both on the job and by in-service study, and to become more useful not only in the classroom but in the wider community.

Roles of Health and Social Services Personnel

Health and Social Services are pupil-related rather than instruction-related. Using the teacher's accumulated written records and their own specific professional knowledge, these services clarify pupil behavior, suggest strategies, and offer guidance. They help to integrate their findings with the behavioral anecdotes submitted by the teacher. From the evidence, they:

(1) help the child to function in the classroom or to adjust in another location

(2) design a program especially for this child so that hopefully he can succeed in learning whether it be in the area of knowledge, skills, or behavior

(3) offer support to the teacher as a person as well as a professional

(4) give consultative help to parents and families, to the teachers and others on her working team

(5) participate in conferences for in-service training of staff, for studying pupils, and for evaluating programs and procedures

(6) interview and counsel pupils individually and in small groups

(7) examine pupils in the area of their specific competency and the child's special need (hearing, vision, dental, psychometric, ability, interest, apptitude, and the like).

(8) focus on preventive and remedial procedures.

Role of the Parent

The teacher and her team work not only with the individual parents but with families. It is the teacher whom the parent meets first and it is she who establishes the bond between home and school. The strength and durability of that bond depends greatly upon the rapport she initiates and the success she has in involving her colleagues. All this is not too difficult, when and if parents operate from the same frame of reference as the team members. However, the problems are greatly intensified when the life-style of the home is basically different from that of the school and its personnel. It is extremely important, then, that the child's first teacher set the tone for home-school relationships by giving parents and families frequent, satisfying contacts with school personnel.

Parents should be invited to share in the child's school experiences by:

(1) an informal, friendly conference when registering the child for admission

(2) a well-planned orientation of a group of parents prior to the beginning of school

(3) regularly scheduled individual conferences for evaluating the child's progress

(4) regularly planned group conferences for evaluating the school's purpose and program

(5) conferences with the school guidance counselor as needed

(6) interviews with the school social worker and referrals by him to non-school agencies when indicated

(7) invitation to observe in the classroom followed by a teacher-parent conference to consider the child's progress and to involve the parent in decisions for next steps

(8) the total team working diligently to replace mistrust with trust, fear with faith, and inadequacy with understanding

Role of the Administrator

The effective administrator (supervisor, principal, consultant) is as responsible for the quality of the kindergarten program as he is for that of the remainder of the school. It is up to him to understand the whys and wherefores of the curriculum for these youngest members of his school. If he does not know the purposes and procedures, if he does not believe in them, how can he give support to the teacher or interpret school policies and practices to parents? If these Fours and Fives are to have a productive and happy introduction to school life, then the administrator should:

(1) seek and find teachers who demonstrate special competence to work with this age level

(2) develop with these teachers a workable philosophy based on recent, reliable research in child growth and development

(3) provide adequate space and appropriate facilities for indoor and outdoor activities

(4) keep the pupil-teacher ratio at the accepted minimum

(5) plan for and participate in an orientation program for the children and their parents prior to the beginning of the school year

(6) plan with the appropriate personnel for the special services needed by individual children

(7) initiate and supervise the keeping of adequate records for each pupil

(8) provide for the orderly articulation of the kindergarten program with that of grade one

(9) interpret the kindergarten program to all members of his staff, professional and non-professional, as well as to parents and the community

(10) review the program at regular intervals with the staff, and endeavor to make the indicated improvements in the instruction

(11) utilize every means available to him to assure the best of relationships among this important team

Role of the State Department of Education

The state Department of Education has for some years provided guidance for those concerned with offering educational services to very young children. It established standards for approval and sent a committee upon request to evaluate programs and to counsel directors of private nursery schools and kindergartens. Now that the state Legislature has made kindergartens mandatory, and they have become an integral part of the public school system, the Department assumes a more active role by:

(1) preparing and distributing Bulletin One: Materials and Equipment for the Fours and Fives; and this Bulletin Two: Operational Guidelines for Administrators.

(2) offering consultative services to local school administrators as they act upon the new legislative mandate to establish kindergartens or as they plan to improve existing programs for the Fours and Fives. There are presently available specialists in school planning, elementary education, guidance, art, music, science, math, English, health and physical education

(3) working with school administrators to insure the orderly articulation of the program for the Fours and Fives with that for the Sixes and Sevens.

(4) working with the state Departments of Health and Welfare in coordinating the activities of these three departments to strengthen the state's total services to young children

(5) urging institutions of higher education to recruit and train qualified personnel for teaching young children

(6) calling for the united effort of all who share in the responsibility of educating the young children of our state